Story City Historical Society (SCHS)

Collections Management Policy

Adopted July 2013

Mission Statement: Story City Historical Society's mission is to acquire, preserve, and interpret artifacts that reflect all phases of the community's and area's past.

History: The Story City Historical Society was established in 1982 for the restoration of the Antique Carousel. The society consists of four properties. The brick waterworks building was opened in 1985 as the Story City Museum. The Sheldall School was acquired in 1990 and the Bartlett Museum was secured in 1996. The 2008 spring opening of the environmentally controlled Carriage House Museum features the 2500 glass negative library as well as Dr. Frances Bartlett Kinne's memories and various rotating displays.

I. SCOPE OF THE COLLECTIONS

A. The SCHS archives and collections serve to fulfill its mission.

B. The objects in the SCHS collections exist in one of the following categories:

1. Permanent collections and accessioned materials that are owned outright by the Society for the purpose of study and exhibition. The materials include, but are not limited to:
    a. Documents including letters, diaries, notebooks, manuscripts and newspaper/magazine articles in their original form and/or in digitized forms
    b. Records of important town activities and institutions in their original form and/or in digitized forms
    c. Artifacts including books and objects
    d. Works of art
2. Non-accessioned collections. These are materials that exist at the Society on a temporary or permanent basis. They consist of
    a. Research and education: Supplemental information, e.g. from other collections, libraries, genealogical research that can be used in genealogical research, exhibits, lectures, public education, publications, etc.
    b. Short-term loans (one year or less) for purposes of cataloging, exhibition or study.

II. ACQUISITION AND ACCESSION POLICY

A. The title to every object accessioned must pass to the Historical Society. Donors will be requested to sign a Deed of Gift giving the Society sole ownership of the item/s.

B. Criteria for determining whether an object should be accepted:
    1. The object is consistent with the Society's mission.
    2. The object is documented as having been made or used in Story City or is significant to Story City.
    3. The object is in good condition.
    4. The Society can properly store and preserve the object.
    5. The object will be used in the foreseeable future.
    6. The object is not encumbered with conditions imposed by the donor regarding its future use or disposition.
    7. The use of the object is not restricted or encumbered by intellectual property rights (copyright, patent, trademark, or trade secret).
    8. The use of the object is not restricted or encumbered by its nature (e.g., obscene, defamatory, potentially an invasion of privacy, physically hazardous).
    9. The object is so unusual that it presents an exceptional opportunity for the Society and thus should be given preferential consideration.
    10. The acceptance of the object in all probability will not result in major future expenses for the Society (for conservation or maintenance or because it opens a new area of collecting).

C. Items that are offered and refused will be returned to the donor. The SCHS will not be responsible for disposal of unwanted items.

D. Special concerns and situations:
    1. Acquisitions by purchase shall be made only after:
        a. proper financing has been arranged
        b. the Board of Directors has verified that the budget will allow the purchase.
    2. Materials left anonymously in the custody of the SCHS will be evaluated and considered for inclusion in the collections. A donation form will be filled out by the Director and filed. The disposition of the item – whether accessioned or disposed of – will be included on that form.
    3. Documents and photographs may be accepted for scanning and inclusion in the SCHS database without the object itself being physically added to the collection.

E. The SCHS will not knowingly accept any object acquired by illegal or unethical means, and will employ only legal and ethical standards in the acquisition, possession and use of its collection.

F. Acquisition and Accessioning Procedures
    1. The Director will be responsible for accepting donations.
    2. If the donor is present he/she will fill out and sign a "Donation Form".
    3. If the item has been received in the mail, the Director will fill out the "Donation Form" and obtain the donor's signature by mail.
    4. Donations accepted into the collection will be acknowledged by a formal letter from the Board of Directors/SCHS Director.
    5. Each item accepted into the collection will be immediately given a unique and standardized identification number for the purpose of cataloging and record-keeping.

G. Tax Deductions: All gifts to the Story City Historical Society are deductible on federal income tax forms according to Internal Revenue Service laws under 501(c)(3).

H. The SCHS does not provide outside parties with appraisals of objects donated, transferred or exchanged to the Museum.

III. DEACCESSION POLICY

A. Deaccessioning procedures
    1. The SCHS Director/volunteers shall recommend items for deaccession if:
        a. the object is a duplicate of an item already in the collection.
        b. the item has deteriorated.
        c. the item does not in any way illuminate the history of Story City or the lives of the people who lived here.
        d. the item cannot be given the necessary care or preservation.
        e. the item is inferior to others in the collection.
    2. The Board of Directors will discuss the proposed deaccession and by a simple majority vote confirm or reject the deaccession of the item.

B. Disposal of items
    1. The SCHS will attempt to notify the donor or heir of the intent of the Historical Society to deaccession an item.
    2. Objects approved for deaccessioning will be disposed of in one of the following ways:
        a. Exchanged with organizations, institutions, or other relevant sources for objects, library or archival material needed in the SCHS collections.

b. Transferred to another museum or public educational institution, i.e. another member of the Story County Historical Alliance.
c. Destroyed if the value is too low to warrant sale, exchange or transfer.

IV. CARE AND CONSERVATION OF COLLECTIONS

A. Every effort consistent with professional standards and ethics and within the financial resources of the SCHS will be made to preserve the collections.
B. The SCHS collections will be stored and exhibited in environmentally safe conditions with museum-standard levels of temperature and humidity to the extent possible.
C. The Board of Directors and SCSH Director will create a "Disaster Plan" to ensure the best possible protection of the collections in the event of fire, smoke, or water damage, or natural disasters.

V. RECORDKEEPING

A. Systematic records concerning the SCHS's collections shall be maintained at all times. They will consist of the following:
    1. Accession Records including Deeds of Gift, Transfer correspondence, copies of wills/trusts or other evidence of ownership, Donation/Gift Agreements, purchase records, insurance documents, valuation documents, etc.
    2. Deaccession Records
    3. Loan forms
    4. Notes on care and conservation of collections
    5. Notes for the interpretation and exhibit of collections
    6. Database inventory of collections
    7. Minutes of Board meetings, etc.

DEFINITIONS

Accessioning: the formal process used to create an immediate, brief, and permanent record of an object, assembly, or lot from the same source, at the same time for which the Society has custody, right, or title, and assigning a unique control number to it.

Acquisition: the administrative process of discovering, preliminary evaluating, negotiating for, taking custody of, and documenting title of an object, assembly or lot.

Cataloging: the curatorial process of classifying and documenting objects usually in complete descriptive detail resulting in extensive information in the form of cards, files, publications, and automated data.

Deaccessioning: the formal process used to remove permanently an object from the collections.

Documenting: the process of producing records to identify and enhance the knowledge and value of collections with the intent of maintaining informational and intellectual control over them.

Inventorying: the overall function of creating, controlling and maintaining information, immediately and briefly, about all objects owned by, and in the care, custody, and control of a museum.

Loans: temporary transfers of collection items from the museum, or temporary transfers of similar items to the museum for stated museum purposes. The transfers do not involve a change of ownership.